COMIC SHOP NEWS

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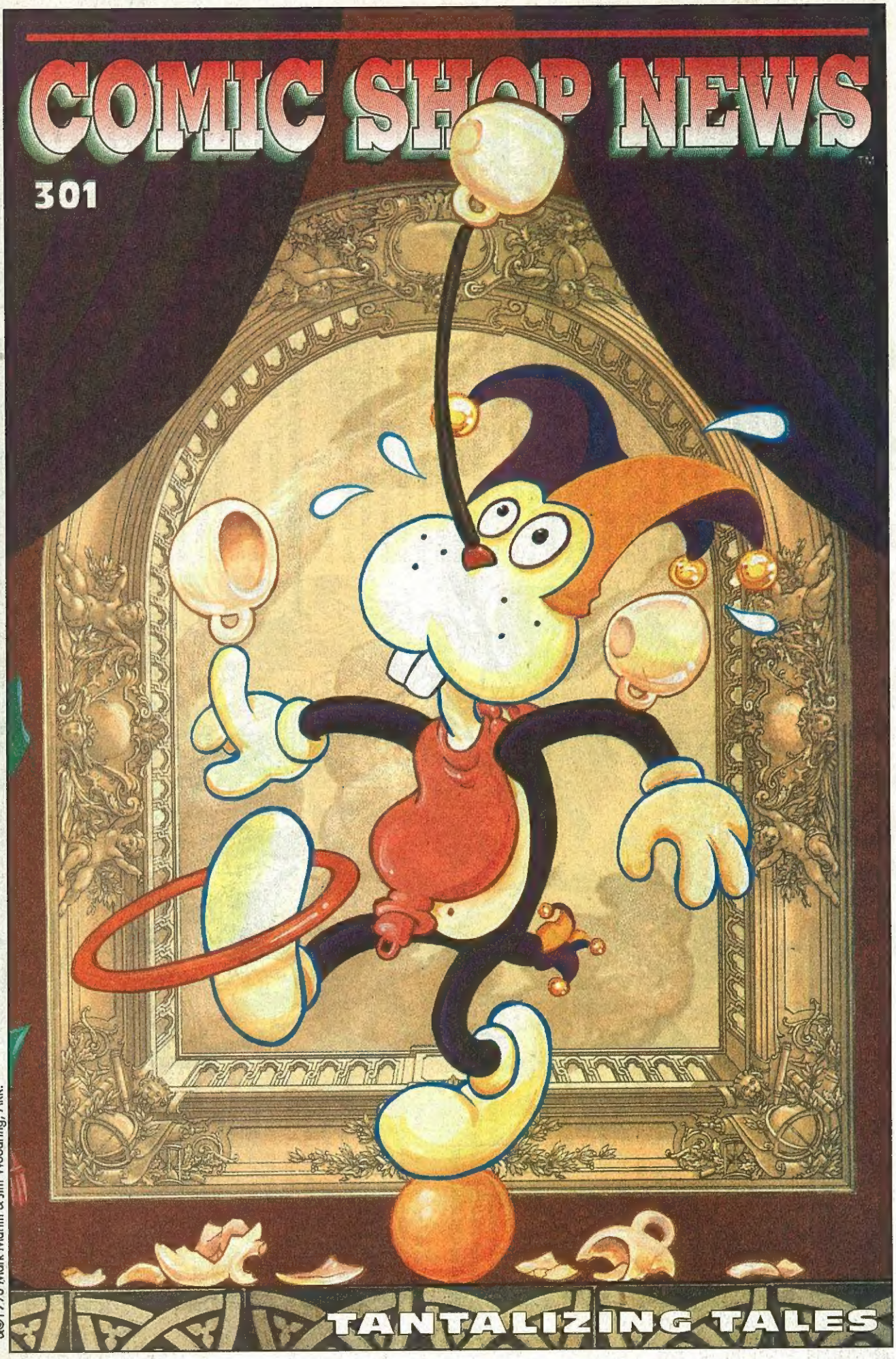
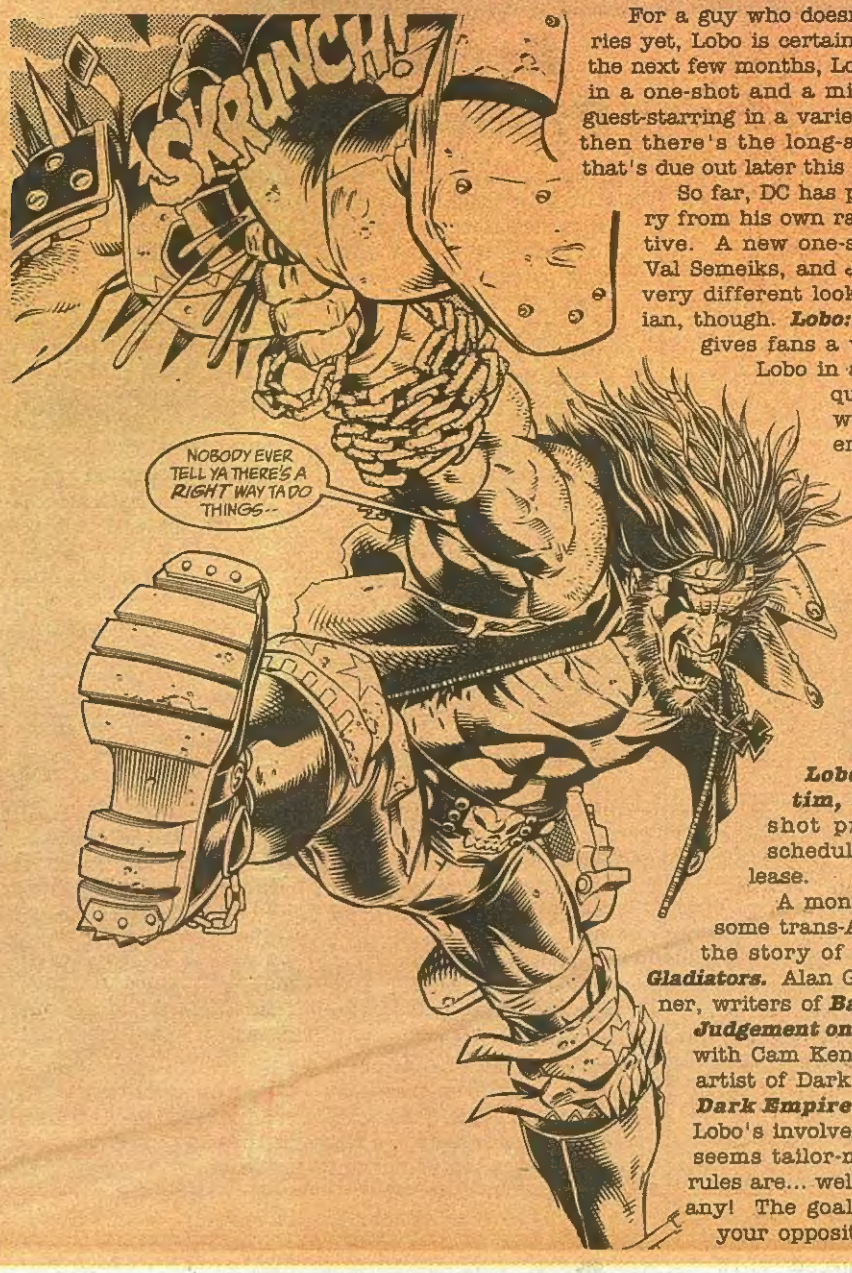


TM&©1993 Mark Martin & Jim Woodring, ARR.

Oh No! It's Lobo!



For a guy who doesn't have his own series yet, Lobo is certainly keeping busy. In the next few months, Lobo will be appearing in a one-shot and a miniseries, as well as guest-starring in a variety of DC titles. And then there's the long-awaited ***Lobo*** series that's due out later this year...

So far, DC has presented Lobo's story from his own rather biased perspective. A new one-shot by Alan Grant, Val Semeiks, and John Dell presents a very different look at the Last Czarnian, though. ***Lobo: Portrait of a Victim*** gives fans a victim's-eye view of Lobo in action; the victim in question is John Doe, who recalls how he ended up in the wrong place at the wrong time as Lobo relieves a few pent-up frustrations. Alas, the insurance investigator who comes to take Doe's statement is a chain-wielding, leather-wearing, cigar-chewing Czarnian...

Lobo: Portrait of a Victim, a new format one-shot priced at $1.75, is scheduled for April 1st release.

A month later, DC calls in some trans-Atlantic talent to tell the story of ***Lobo: UnAmerican Gladiators.*** Alan Grant and John Wagner, writers of ***Batman/Judge Dredd: Judgement on Gotham***, join forces with Cam Kennedy, the acclaimed artist of Dark Horse's ***Star Wars: Dark Empire***, to tell the tale of Lobo's involvement in a game that seems tailor-made for Lobo. The rules are... well, there really aren't any! The goal: the destruction of your opposition. The reward: a planet of your very own. Of course, for Lobo, the reward is the destruction of your opposition, but that's beside the point...

In ***UnAmerican Gladiators,*** Lobo travels to Mondo Carne, where he signs up for The Main Game. This brutal game attracts such upstanding citizens as B.D. Rickenbacker, Killer Kawalski, and the Satan Brothers... and Lobo, who is convinced he can take 'em all. The four-issue limited series features the sort of ultraviolence for which Lobo has become infamous. ***Lobo: UnAmerican Gladiators #1,*** a $1.75 comic with a Mike Mignola cover, is scheduled for April 29th release.

Of course, Lobo will also be appearing in the pages of ***Guy Gardner, Demon,*** and ***LEGION '93,*** where he has become a virtual regular. And later this year comes the long-awaited event that all Lobo fans have demanded: the debut of Lobo's ongoing PG-rated series! Perhaps badness *is* its own reward...

by WAYNE LEE

A Tantalizing Trade-Off

Tantalizing Stories, Tundra Comics' offbeat title co-produced by Jim Woodring and Mark Martin, is a cutting-edge title that refuses to follow the current comics trends. It offers no superhero slugfests, no embossed holo-foil covers, no bagged-in trading cards—but it does offer top-quality story and art starring the enigmatic Frank created by Woodring and the anthropomorphic Walt-Kelly-esque Montgomery Wart created by Mark Martin.

But there's something a little bit *odd* happening in ***Tantalizing Stories #4...***

With the fourth issue, Martin and Woodring decide to show one another—as well as the book's many readers—just how they'd handle the other's comic book creation. That means that Jim Woodring will try his hand at Montgomery Wart and Mark Martin will present his interpretation of Frank. The results should certainly be memorable—and very appealing to fans who are curious to see just how two creators who put so much of their personality in their own comics would interpret someone else's characters.

Tantalizing Stories #4, a $2.25 comic, is scheduled for April release.

by KIM B. PEARSON

Warlock Finds a New Home

There aren't too many heroes who can claim the dubious distinction of being thrown out of their own comic book—but that's an "honor" to that's being bestowed upon Warlock in May, when he's banished from our universe and from his own title, ***Warlock and the Infinity Watch.*** That doesn't mean that the Marvel Universe is about to become Warlock-less, though...

The exile of Warlock occurs in the first issue of ***Infinity Crusade,*** when the Goddess—a persona whose origins harken back to Warlock himself—banishes the hero to a distant dimension so that he can't interfere with her plan to free our universe from evil. ***Warlock Chronicles*** is a new ongoing series that follows Warlock as he strives to return to our world.

The first several issues of ***Warlock Chronicles*** will introduce several other inhabitants of this strange dimension, including Lord Chaos and Master Order, Darklore the Mystic (a close personal friend of Jim Starlin's Darklon the Mystic, perhaps?...), and the mysterious holder of the Reality Gem. According to Marvel's Kevin Tang, "The first five issues cross over with themes touched upon in ***Infinity Crusade.***" From there... well, Marvel's not revealing exactly what happens after that, since it might give away the results of Warlock's quest to return home.

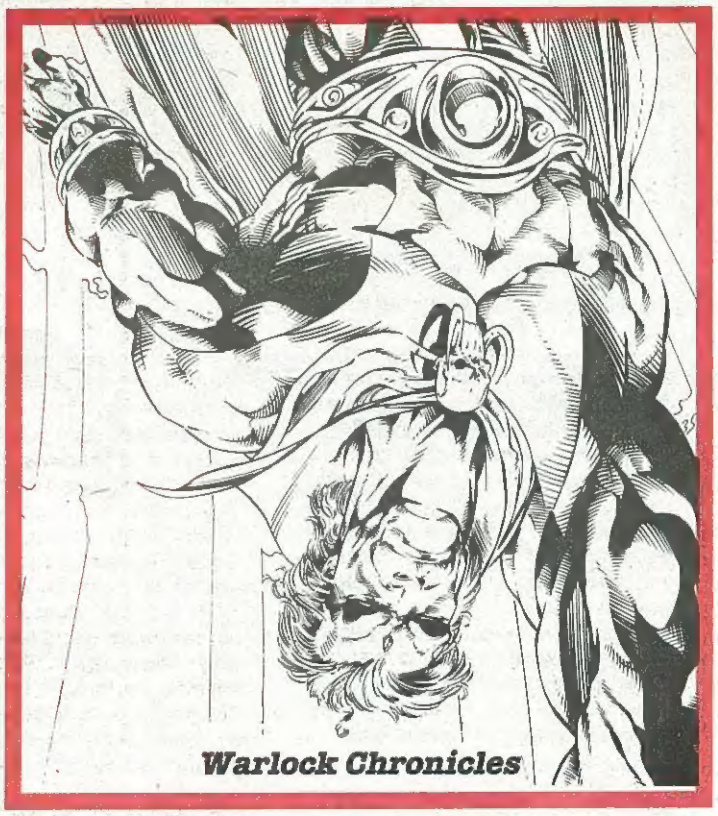
Warlock Chronicles is written by Jim Starlin, writer of Marvel's ***Infinity Gauntlet, War,*** and ***Crusade*** series; Starlin is the best-known chronicler of Warlock's original adventures as well as the ***Warlock and the Infinity Watch*** series. He is joined by Tom Raney, who has already admirably demonstrated his ability to illustrate Warlock's exploits in the pages of ***Infinity Watch.***

Warlock Chronicles #1 will feature a holografx foil cover enhancement that Marvel describes as "particularly arresting." "We're embossing the figure of Warlock and the logo," Kevin Tang said, "which will make the cover strikingly three-dimensional."

Warlock Chronicles #1, a $2.95 comic, is scheduled for May 6th release.

by CLIFF BIGGERS

Infinity Crusade



Warlock Chronicles

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COMICS SHOP NEWS™
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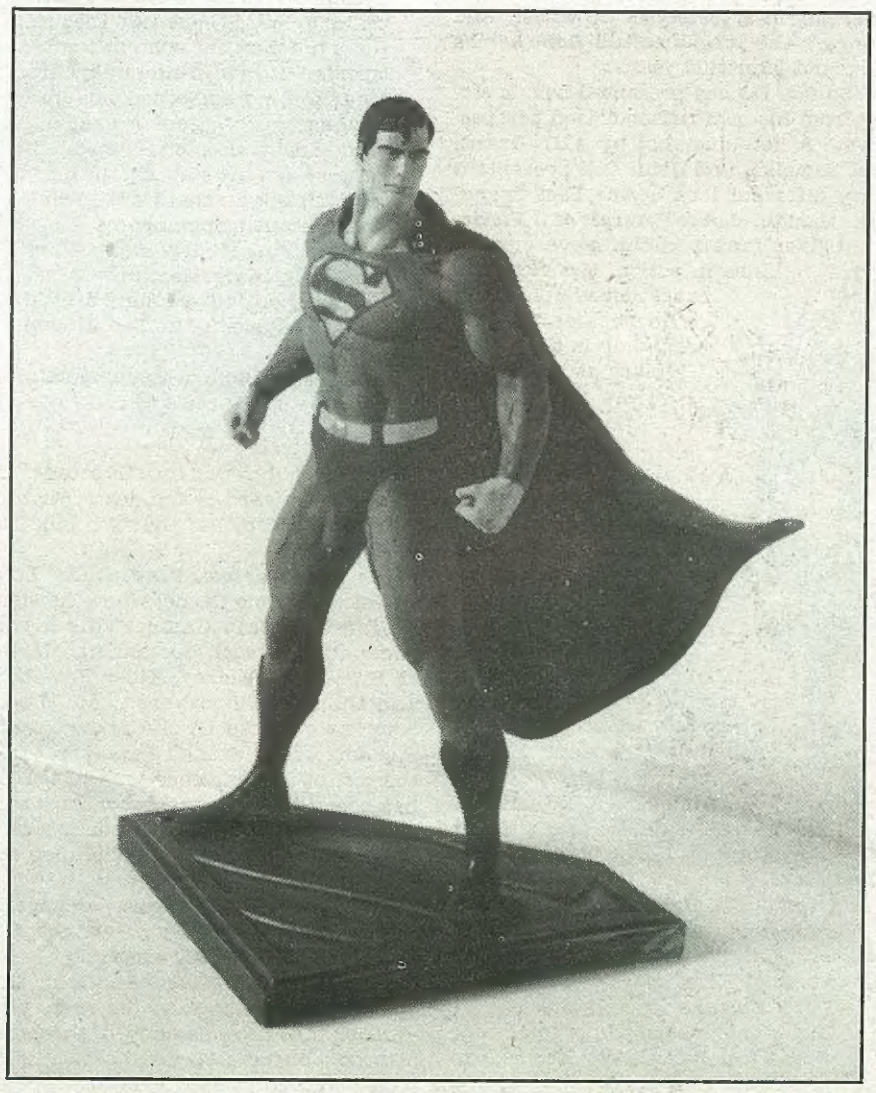
From Your Friendly Neighborhood Comics Outlet
Printed on 100% Recycled Newsprint

A Porcelain Statue of Steel

DC's statue line, which has been praised by fans for its high-quality, accurate three-dimensional renderings, adds another offering in August: Superman. The statue, which stands over ten inches tall, is sculpted by *Randy Bowen* based on a sketch by ***Superman*** artist *Dan Jurgens;* the figure will be shipped pre-painted in two pieces with minimal assembly required. The prices on DC's earlier statues have climbed impressively once the statues were unavailable; with the tremendous interest shown in Superman in recent months, you can expect this statue to follow that pattern as well. The ***Superman Statue*** is priced at $150.00; DC hopes to have it in stores on August 12th, although the release could be delayed as much as two months if orders exceed production capacity. If you're interested in adding this high-quality collectible to your showcase or display shelf, be sure to let your local comic shop know—and tell 'em that ***CSN*** sent you! (As with all expensive collectibles of this sort, your comic shop may ask you to put down an advance deposit to guarantee your statue.)



A Shirt You Can Sink Your Teeth Into

Lobo has never had a reputation as an amiable guy; this May, Lobo fans can express the same callous disregard for their fellow comic fans as Lobo does, thanks to Graphitti Designs. The new Graphitti Designs ***Lobo T-Shirt,*** an eye-catching design that is far more than just another printed shirt, captures the characteristic Lobo contempt in a design that any fan with an attitude can afford.

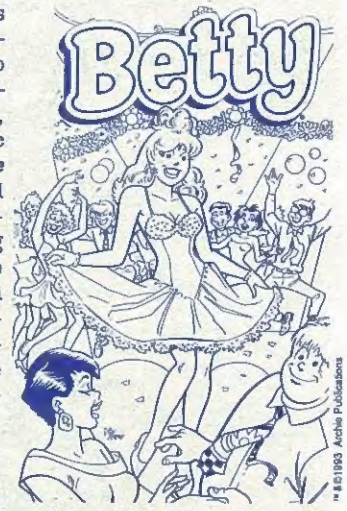
The ***Lobo T-Shirt*** features the characteristic Lobo "Bite Me, Fanboy" design on the back, with a Lobo logo on the left breast of the shirt. According to Graphitti Designs, "Every screen-printing 'enhancement' we could think of, from puff-inks to spot colors, has been cleverly used to make you think elements of this shirt design have actually been sewn and embroidered directly onto the shirt. This will be a multi-colored, three-dimensional extravaganza the likes of which you have never seen before." All of this can be yours for only $19.95; be sure to let the friendly folks at your local comic shop know that you're interested (and be a bit more polite than Lobo would be, okay?)—and tell 'em that ***CSN*** sent you...

Archie Spotlights Prom-inent Storyline

If you've been out of high school for a while, you may have forgotten just how important the prom is to many students—but the guys at Archie Comics haven't forgotten... because it's their business to remember! As *Paul Castiglia* of Archie Comics said, "As far back as the historic 'Prom Pranks' in ***Archie Comics #1,*** Archie has had trouble with proms. Fifty-one years later, nothing has changed!" Three Archie titles shipping in May—the typical prom season—will feature a prom-related storyline telling the same tale from three different points of view.

Archie #414's lead story, "Prom Problem," will focus on Archie's quintessential dilemma: should he ask Betty or Veronica to the prom. *Bob Bolling* and *Stan Goldberg* give readers an insiders view as Archie makes his decision.

Betty #7's "Prom Promise" makes Archie's choice perfectly clear...although Archie isn't even sure that he made a choice! He accidentally asks Betty to the prom—but when she comes down with a nasty cold, it looks like Archie's dilemma may be solved, courtesy of a persistent rhinovirus... *Bob Bolling* and *Doug Crane* follow romance's circuitous path.



The problem is finally solved in ***Veronica #29*** in a story entitled "Prom Promoter." In this tale, written by *Bob Bolling* and illustrated by *Stan Goldberg*, Veronica sets out to ensure that Archie makes her, not Betty, his ultimate prom choice.

Will the problem be resolved? You bet! Will this be the end of Archie's prom problems? Certainly not!,... and we wouldn't have it any other way.

Berzerker Readies For High-Profile Image

Berzerker, the story of a human being who is recreated by sentient machines as the ultimate cyborg warrior, has already been one of Caliber's most popular books, thanks in large part to the artwork by *Angel Medina* and *Erik Larsen*. The book is about to become much more popular, though; later on this year, Berzerker should appear in the new Image title ***Vanguard,*** which will be written by ***Berzerker*** creator *Gary Carlson*. Once that happens, there'll be lotsa Image fans scrounging for any leftover copies of ***Berzerker***—so don't wait until it's too late to take a look at this hard-hitting series. ***Berzerker #2***, a $2.95 May release from Caliber, also introduces Ultiman, the ultimate human being, in a series written by *Gary Carlson* and illustrated by *Jim Shallet* and *Don Simpson*. *Angel Medina* supplies the cover for the second issue, while *Steve Adams* illustrates the saga of Alexander Kirk, Berzerker.

THE MOST UNEXPECTED SHOCK ISSUE OF THE
Fantastic Four
#376
SOME ISSUES POLYBAGGED WITH COPY OF "DIRT" MAGAZINE.
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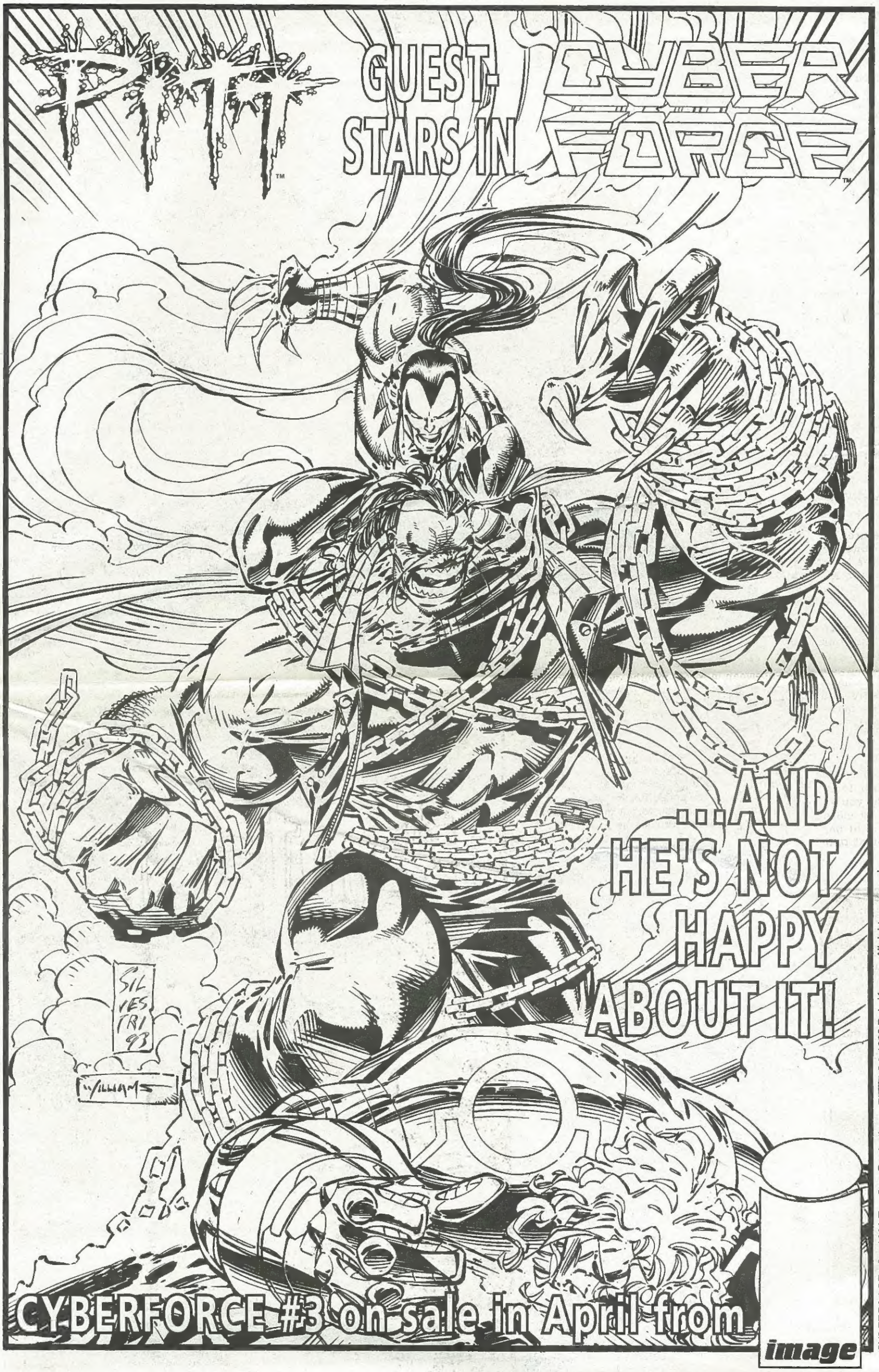
PITT
GUEST-STARS IN CYBER FORCE
...AND HE'S NOT HAPPY ABOUT IT!
SIL IES TRI 93
WILLIAMS
CYBERFORCE #3 on sale in April from
image
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Milestone Gives Fans a Little Static

CSN has always kept readers updated on current events, so here's news of a comic we think you'll get a charge out of... The final rollout title in Milestone's line, ***Static,*** is slated for May release; in the first issue, fans meet a reluctant hero who's in for the shock of his life!

Static is fifteen-year-old Virgil Hawkins, who had no desires to be a superhero. He just wanted to get even with a gang member who had humiliated him. His desire for revenge brought him to Paris Island on the night of the "Big Bang," the police action that utilized the radioactive marker that helped to create Blood Syndicate—and so Static was born.

Virgil's powers are based on static electricity, but he can take that electrostatic field to incredible extremes. He has the ability to create force fields, to fire lightning bolts, to throw "taser punches" and even to fly. If only he could make his high-school life a little more pleasant, everything would be great; alas, Virgil remains the unpopular, overlooked teenager he was before the "Big Bang," because he can't tell anyone about his powers.

Static is written by *Dwayne McDuffie* and *Robert L. Washington III*; the series is illustrated by *John Paul Leon* and *Steve Mitchell*. *Denys Cowan* and *Jimmy Palmiotti* supply the cover art for the first issue.

Static #1 will be released in the same two formats as the other three Milestone-rollout premiere issues. The collector's set, priced at $2.95, will be polybagged to include, along with the book, a trading card, a Who's Who style profile of the character, a poster, and one set of a four-part, sixteen-piece puzzle/mural. The standard format edition, priced at $1.50, will include none of the extras. Both editions are scheduled for May 6th release.

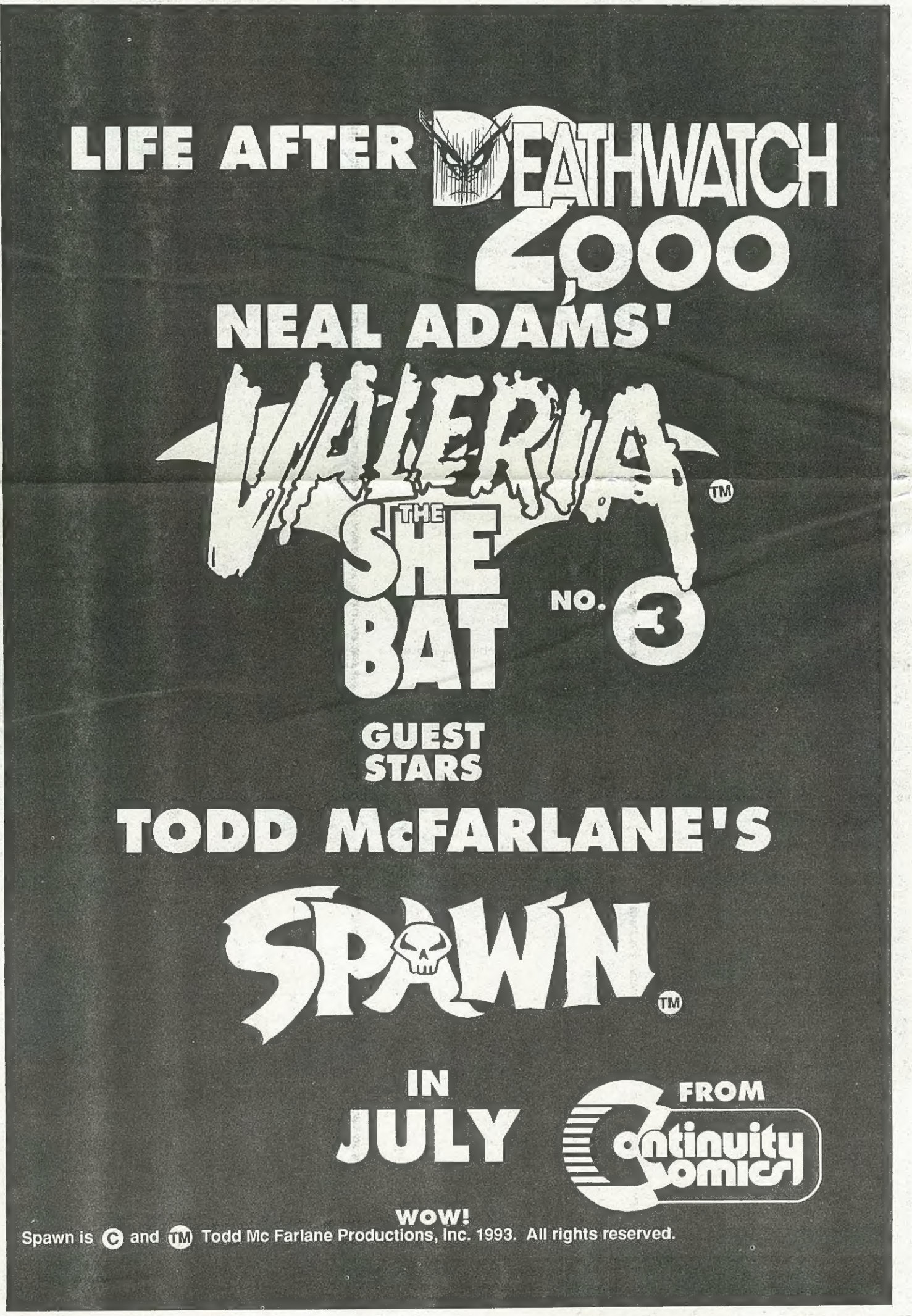
A Harlequin Romance

The loss of a loved one to death is a traumatic event that everyone wishes he or she could reverse—but the Harlequin isn't willing to stop at wishing. ***Harlequin,*** a 32-page $2.95 comic from Caliber Press, is the story of a man who is unwilling to let Death take his true love away. According to Caliber, "It is a search for what was lost but can be found again with opened eyes. It is a tragedy, a comedy, it is the gentle manipulation that we call life." Written by *Steven Csutoras* and illustrated by *Stefano Gaudiano*, Harlequin originally appeared in the pages of ***Dark Horse Presents***; this one-shot is a precursor to an upcoming ***Harlequin*** series that should debut later this year. Look for ***Harlequin*** in May.

A Micro-Chip Off the Old Block

If there are any writers at Marvel who should be familiar with Punisher, it's *Carl Potts* and *Mike Baron*. Mike Baron was the writer of the ***Punisher*** flagship title for quite a while, while Potts penned the adventures in ***Punisher War Journal.*** Both have moved on to other projects since then, but that doesn't mean that they've abandoned the Punisher forever. In fact, they're returning to the world of Frank Castle again in May with a two-issue limited series that focuses on a vital member of the Punisher's supporting cast.

Punisher: Origin of Micro Chip , illustrated by *Louis Williams*, offers fans the first serious look at the beginnings of the Punisher-Micro Chip relationship. The miniseries presents the early days of the relationship from two very different points of view: the Punisher's and Micro Chip's. ***Punisher: Origin of Micro Chip #1,*** a $1.75 comic, is scheduled for May 4th release.



CSN CHARTS

TOP 50 COMICS

CSN's Top Seller charts are based on figures supplied by the two major distributors, Diamond Distribution and Capital City Distribution, as well as figures by a cross-section of comics speciality shops. The distributor's figures represent retailer orders placed on the titles, while the information from stores represents copies sold.

1. Spawn 8
2. Venom 3
3. Cyberforce 2
4. Rai & the Future Force 9
5. Hellstorm 1
6. X-Men 19
7. Uncanny X-Men 299
8. Wild Thing 1
9. Fantastic Four 375
10. Magnus: Robot Fighter 24
11. Brigade 3
12. X-Force 21
13. Spider-Man 2099 6
14. Punisher 2099 3
15. Savage Dragon Vs. Megaton Man 1
16. Namor the sub-mariner 37
17. X-Factor 89
18. Wolverine 68
19. Doom 2099 4
20. Amazing Spider-Man 376
21. Hardware 1 Collectors Edition
22. Bloodshot 4
23. Legionnaires 1
24. Simpsons Comics & Stories 1
25. Eternal Warrior 10
26. Blood Syndicate 1 Collectors Edition
27. Spider-Man 33
28. Death: The High Cost of Living 2
29. Secret Defenders 2
30. She-Hulk 50
31. Black Axe 1
32. Silver Surfer/Warlock: Resurrection 2
33. X-O Manowar 16
34. Harbinger 17
35. Supergirl/Team Luthor Special 1
36. HARD Corps 6
37. Midnight Sons Unlimited 1
38. Super Soldiers 1
39. Sandman Mystery Theatre 1
40. Solar, Man of the Atom 21
41. Ravage 2099 5
42. Predator: Race War 1
43. Archer & Armstrong 10
44. Ghost Rider 36
45. Deaths Head II 5
46. Aliens: Colonial Marines 2
47. Web of Spider-Man 99
48. Incredible Hulk 404
49. Sandman 48
50. Spectacular Spider-Man 199

TOP DOLLAR COMICS

The following comics, graphic novels and trade paperbacks were given Top Dollar ratings based on the dollar volume of the copies sold (or are expected to sell) during the late March and April sales period.

1. Venom 3
2. Spawn 8
3. Rai & the Future Force 9
4. Hellstorm 1
5. Cyberforce 3
6. Fantastic Four 375
7. Midnight Sons Unlimited 1
8. Wild Thing 1
9. Magnus Robot Fighter 24
10. Hardware 1 Collectors Edition
11. Blood Syndicate 1 Collectors Edition
12. Brigade 3
13. Savage Dragon Vs. Megaton Man 1
14. Namor the Sub-mariner 37
15. X-Men 19
16. Simpsons Comics & Stories 1
17. She-Hulk 50
18. Uncanny X-Men 299
19. Wolverine 68
20. Bloodshot 4
21. Eternal Warrior 10
22. Silver Surfer/Warlock: Resurrection 2
23. Harbinger 17
24. Supergirl/Team Luthor Special 1
25. HARD Corps 6
26. Super Soldiers 1
27. Spider-Man 2099 6
28. Punisher 2099 3
29. Spider-Man 33
30. X-O Manowar 16
31. Predator: Race War 1
32. Solar, Man of the Atom 21
33. X-Factor 89
34. Death: The High Cost of Living 2
35. Archer & Armstrong 10
36. Aliens: Colonial Marines 2
37. Doom 2099 4
38. Secret Defenders 2
39. Black Axe 1
40. Sandman Mystery Theatre 1
41. Amazing Spider-Man 376
42. Legionnaires 1
43. Punisher: Ghosts of the Innocents 2
44. Darkman 1
45. Mercy 1
46. Ghost Rider 36
47. Deaths Head II 5
48. Sandman 48
49. Ren & Stimpy 5
50. Superman Gallery 1

TOP 10 BLACK & WHITE COMICS

1. Berzerker 1
2. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 56
3. Dark Horse Presents 71
4. Cerebus 167
5. Savage Sword of Conan 208
6. Macross II 5
7. Ranma 1/2 Part II 2
8. Battle Angel Alita 8
9. Conan Saga 73
10. Terminal Point 2

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TOP TEN NON-COMICS

The Top Ten Non-Comics is based on number and not dollar value. This category includes graphic novels, hardcovers, trade paperbacks, portfolios, etc. It includes books that actually were on sale during the March sales period.

1. DC Cosmic Teams Cards
2. Olivia II Foil Prism Cards
3. Boris III Foil Prism Cards
4. Wizard 19
5. Death of Superman TPB
6. X-Men II Trading Cards
7. Batman: Night Cries TPB
8. Comics Values Monthly 80
9. Marvel Universe Master Edition 28
10. Overstreet Comic Book Marketplace 1

NEAL ADAMS

BY CLIFF BIGGERS

Few people need an introduction less than Neal Adams. Since the late 1960's, Neal Adams has been one of the biggest talents in the industry, illustrating fan-favorite titles for both DC and Marvel, doing superb horror work for Warren, and generally changing the look of comic book art. In the early 80's, he was one of the first big-name creators to venture into independent comics publishing; for the past several years, he has been the anchor of Continuity Comics, his own company.

This spring, Continuity is making a major return to the comics market with Deathwatch 2000, a crossover series that will re-introduce six Continuity titles. Taking a few minutes away from the final phases of Deathwatch 2000's preparation, Neal talked with CSN about the Deathwatch series and other future Continuity projects.

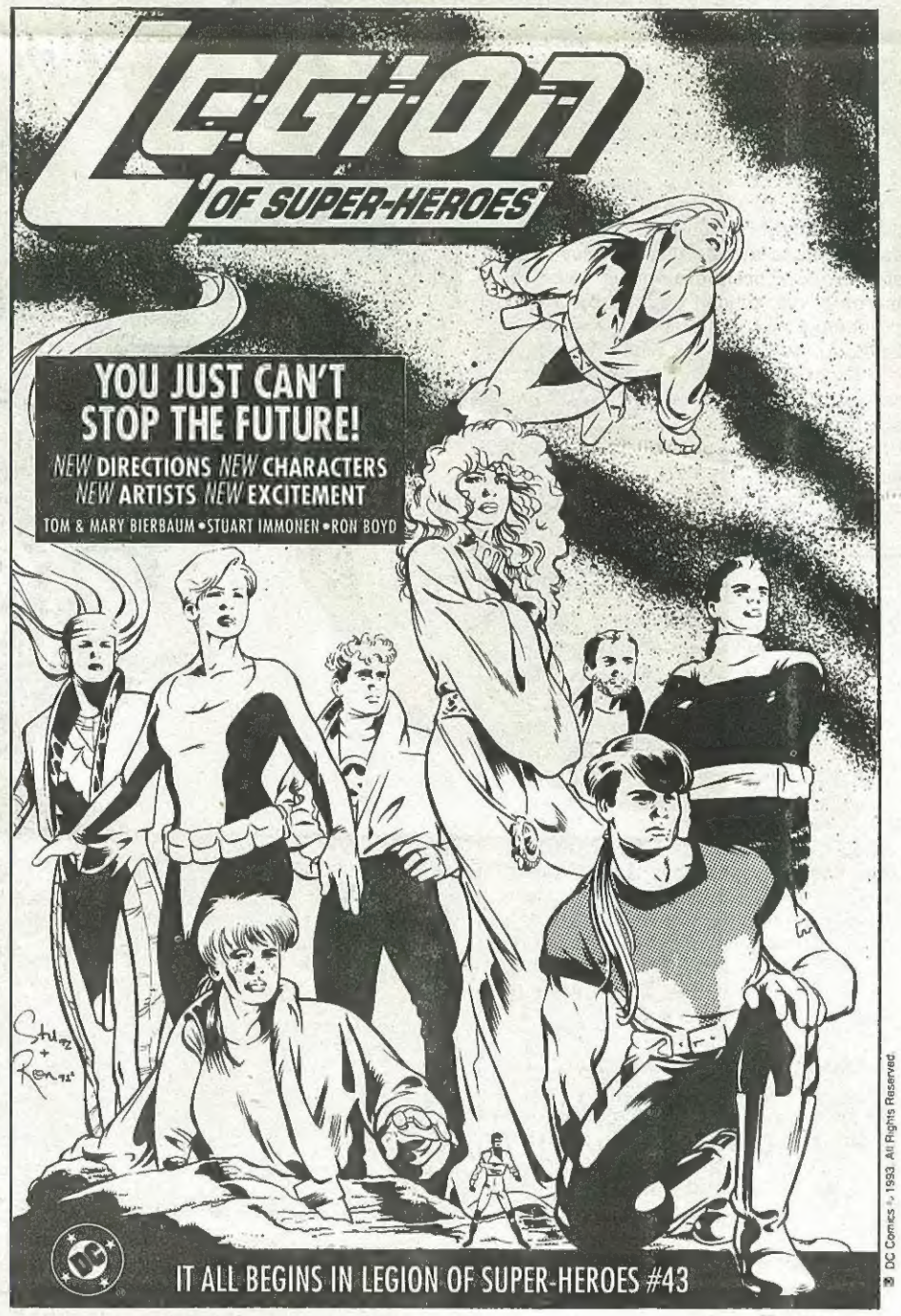
We wanted to talk about Continuity's big comeback—

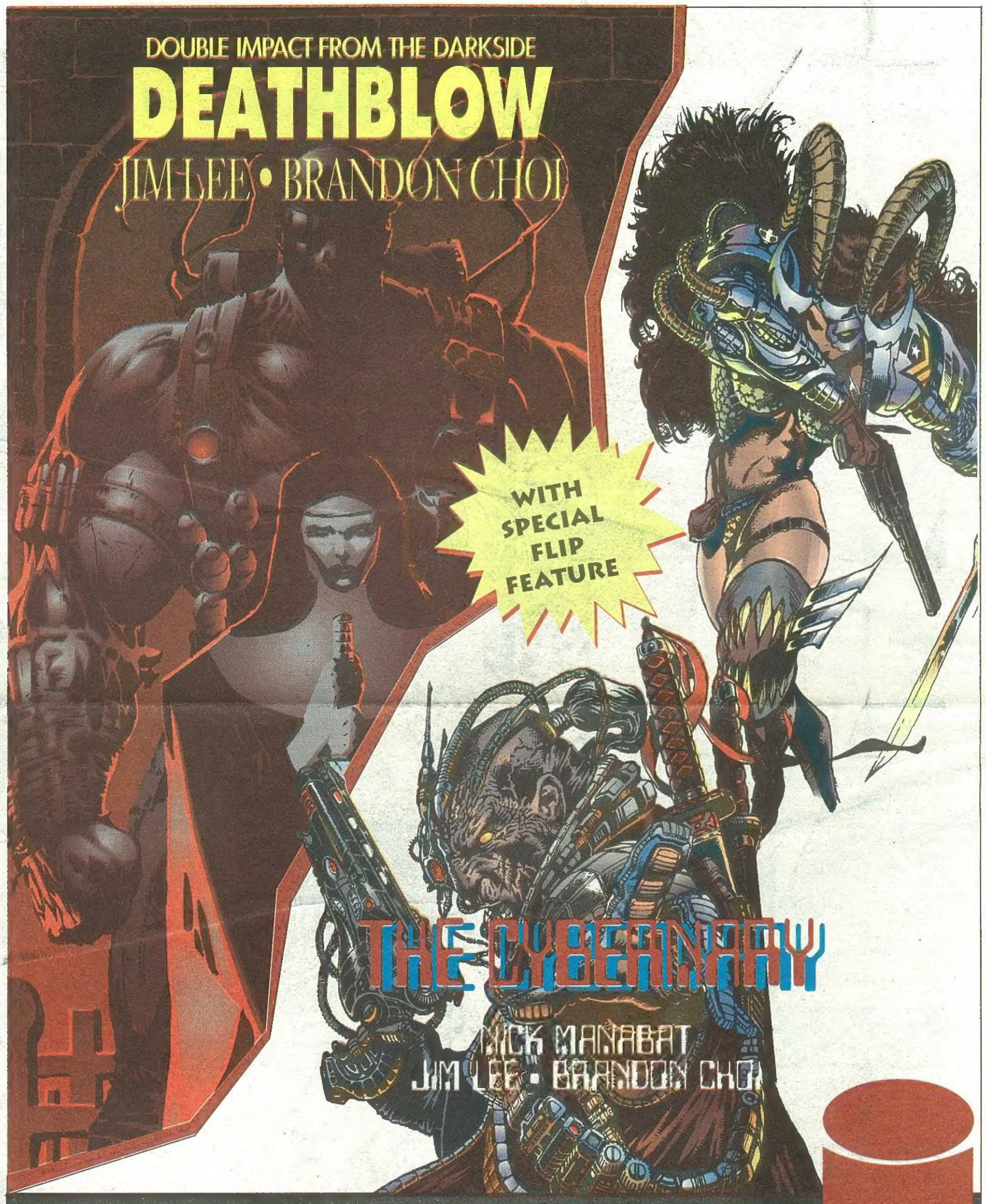
I didn't know that we were ever really there, actually. Obviously, as with anything that's really worthwhile, Continuity's ***Deathwatch 2000*** plan came from mundane outside reasons. We've suffered the difficulty of knowing that we did really terrific comic books, but also knowing that all the criticisms of Continuity had been on the money all along. We just didn't have the financial backing to make the major launch that we wanted.

What we decided to do, not quite a year ago, was to make the supreme effort to come out monthly. What we discovered, though, was that to come out monthly, at the numbers we were getting in terms of orders, didn't make financial sense. We had to have a more sensible plan; we couldn't afford to wait the six months or a year it would take for us to slowly build up.

Basically, we just closed down shop and went shopping for financial backing. We ran into four or five people who knew about Continuity, believed in us, felt very strongly about us, and without taking any portion of Continuity would be willing to invest the kind of money it would take for us to do a really solid launch. Since we were assuming that was going to happen to begin with, we had already set our minds on creating this launch in a way that, when the money started to turn up, we would have the talent lined up to turn out monthly books.

The next question was how do we launch. If you know anything about me, you know that I think long-term and consider the things that I work on projects; it was that way


LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES
YOU JUST CAN'T STOP THE FUTURE!
NEW DIRECTIONS NEW CHARACTERS
NEW ARTISTS NEW EXCITEMENT
TOM & MARY BIERBAUM • STUART IMMONEN • RON BOYD
IT ALL BEGINS IN LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #43
DC Comics - 1993 All Rights Reserved



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FIRST YOU FELT THE BLOOD . . .
NOW YOU CAN SEE IT!
FIRST EVER MIRRICOTE COVER!
BRIGADE #2
LIEFELD · STEPHENSON
MYCHAELS · RAPMUND
ON SALE IN MAY
image
MARK LIEFELD
BRIGADE IS TM & © 1993 ROB LIEFELD

with the ***Green Lantern-Green Arrow*** stuff, it was that way on ***X-Men,*** it was that way on ***Avengers...*** even if you take the Superman-Muhamed Ali book, of all things, it was a long-term thing that I devoted myself to. I like thinking that way.

We looked around to see who was doing the best marketing around. At that time—and perhaps even still, although everyone's getting smarter in terms of marketing—Valiant was doing the smartest marketing. They weren't doing well initially, then they came up with this crossover concept, giveaways, gold covers, and other things to attract readers. We decided that they were doing it right, so we studied their plan and took all the things that they did right and developed it as our plan.

Once we realized that that was the way to go, I knew that I had a project that was perfect for it: ***Deathwatch 2000. Deathwatch 2000*** has two major elements: first of all, it's a crossover, and the second is that it has an ecological angle. Since I'm publisher and in charge of things, if I care about the world and the way things are going, then I can make the decision to do stories about that. Since I do, and since I'm in the position to make those decisions, we just wrapped our story around the current problems of the world. I have a long history of ecological involvement; it's always been my opinion that those elements make as good a story as anything else. As long as you're not missing the action—flying, fighting, dying, punching people through buildings— it really doesn't matter what the story is about. If you serve two purposes, educating and telling a good story, there's no reason why you can't turn anything into solid entertainment.

The ***Deathwatch 2000*** project enables us to solve two problems at the same time. We're living up to our own sense of responsibility and at the same time we're turning out what I think are really great comic books. People seem to like it a lot, judging from advance response.

What happens after Deathwatch 2000?

When we were in the planning stage for this project, we were in the process of going monthly, so we had a large number of comics already in the works that we had to shelve. This means that, immediately on coming out of ***Deathwatch 2000*** in June, we have four months of projects already in the drawer. We've had to do a little bit of switching with that, though, because of some ideas that have come to us along the way.

Two sets of our books, plus other indications in our other books, led me to the conclusion that our second crossover doesn't need to be that far away. The next crossover, which will be called ***The Rise of Magic,*** starts almost immediately in the next set of books. Just as ***Deathwatch*** starts with a Prelude, we have four months that lead up to the ***Rise of Magic*** storyline; there are key things that happen in that four months of books that lead into the ***Rise of Magic***. That was part of a long-term plan that hadn't originally been codified into a crossover series; once we decided to do it, though, we realized that it fit right in. We're not really announcing it as such, but we're letting people know that the second crossover is coming. Pretty soon we'll be announcing which books will be a part of it—but I can say right now that Armor will definitely be a part of this crossover.

Will other Continuity characters be returning?

Crazyman hasn't had a part in either one of these crossovers; Samuree, who has been among the missing lately, will be coming back and will have a major role in the next crossover. Toyboy will be coming back, but there's a question as to whether he'll be a part of ***The Rise of Magic.*** Strangely enough, ***Toyboy*** has been an artist's and writer's favorite; we have a backlog of five books that artists volunteered to do. They'd come to Continuity and we'd ask them what they wanted to draw, they'd immediately say ***Toyboy,*** because it seemed like a lot of fun. We had a lot of ***Toyboy*** stories done that we had to shelve; we'll be bringing him back, but because of all this backlog of stories, he won't be a part of the ***Rise of Magic.*** He will be a part of the third crossover, though, which is a sort of intergalactic war.

I did an intergalactic war in ***Avengers*** a long time ago that was dissatisfying; it didn't play out the way I wanted it to play out because4e personalities got involved. Because of that, I've always wanted to do an intergalactic war and do it right; I'll get to do that next year, and Toyboy will be a big part of that.

We're also doing a short crossover with Valeria the She-Bat and Spawn. Valeria starts as a bonus book available to fans who purchase a certain number of other Continuity

MAXIMUM CARNAGE
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SPIDER-MAN
ANNOUNCING THE PREMIER OF SPIDER-MAN UNLIMITED#1 AND THE START OF MAXIMUM CARNAGE THE 14 PART SPIDER-MAN CROSSOVER.
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MARC SPECTOR:
MOON KNIGHT™
#50
AN AVENGER NO MORE
MARVEL COMICS
LOOK FOR THE SMOKIN' DIE-CUT COVER!!!
BY KAVANAGH, FRY & IVY
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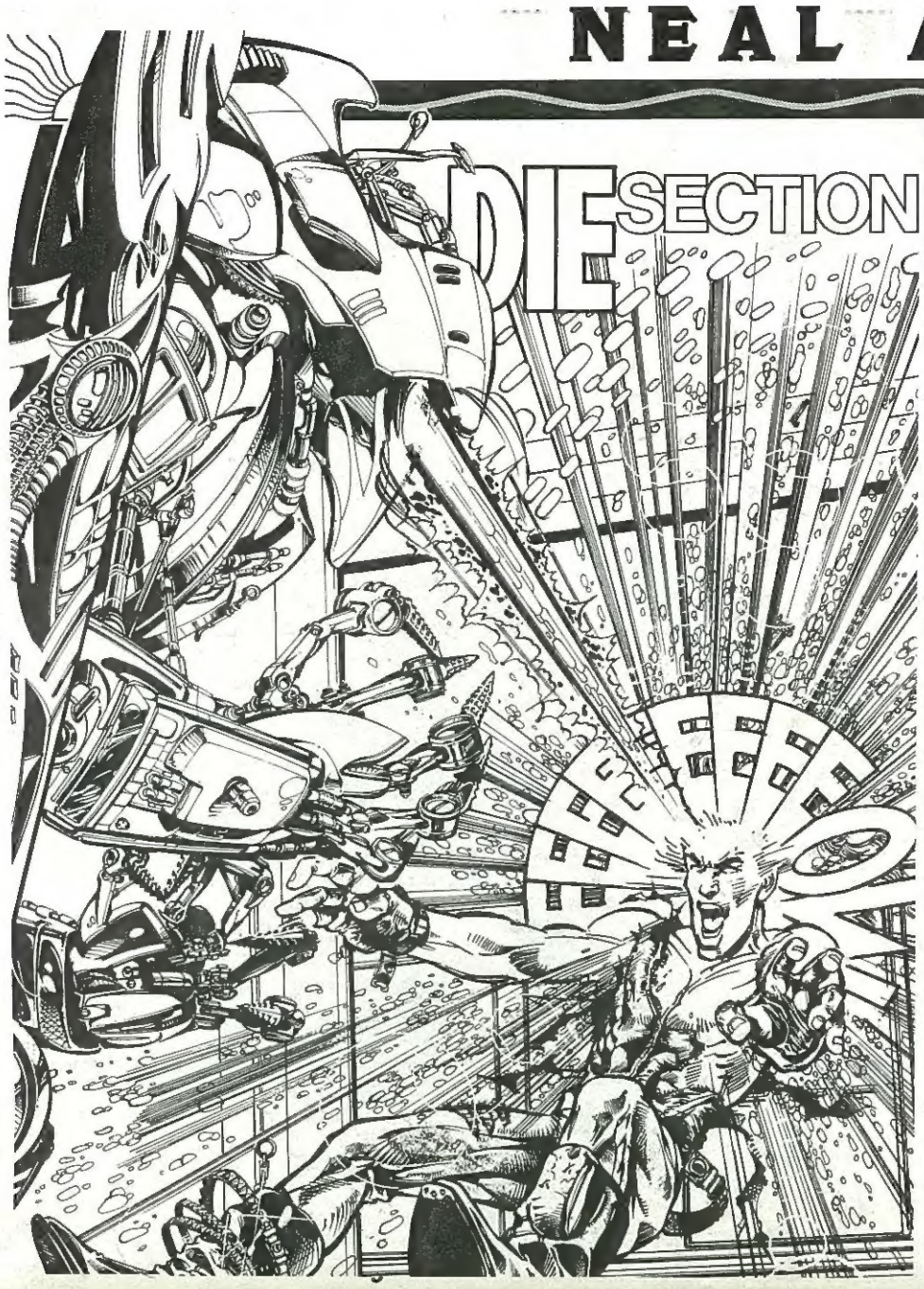


books. I've been penciling and inking ***Valeria,*** and will continue to do so through the third, and probably the fourth and fifth issues, of the book. What's going to happen in that book, though, is that the third issue is going to cross over with Todd McFarlane's Spawn. Todd's going to work on his part of it and I'm going to work on my part of it; that'll be in ***Valeria the She-Bat #3***, in June or July. This is our first crossover project outside of Continuity, and we think it's really a nice one.

How'd that crossover come about?

I'm in this business for fun. I hate to put it that way, but it's true. I'm in comics for fun and to make some kind of a contribution. It's nice to be able to make money along the way, of course, but I'm more motivated by fun. When someone asked me what I'd like to do, I said, "Shoot, I'd like to do a book with Spawn. Can you call Todd McFarlane and work that out?" That's my attitude; if he says no, it's no—but in this case he said yes, so we're going to do it.

It's so interesting to see other publishers succeed in the superhero field. I'm sorry that other people are crabbing about it; it seems to me that this is part of the big mix. As far as the enjoyment of comic books is concerned, the more this happens, the better. The readers are getting the benefit of it. I think they'll have fun with ***Deathwatch*** and with what comes after it, too; we're having a lot of fun, and we think that readers will like it.

Continuity has a reputation as a quality-art company. Is that something you try to maintain?

When you start to get a little bit of attention; the people who might have done work for Marvel or DC come to us instead. We just got a cover from Michael Golden that's really great; we just had Rudy Nebres do a wraparound cover that's just terrific.

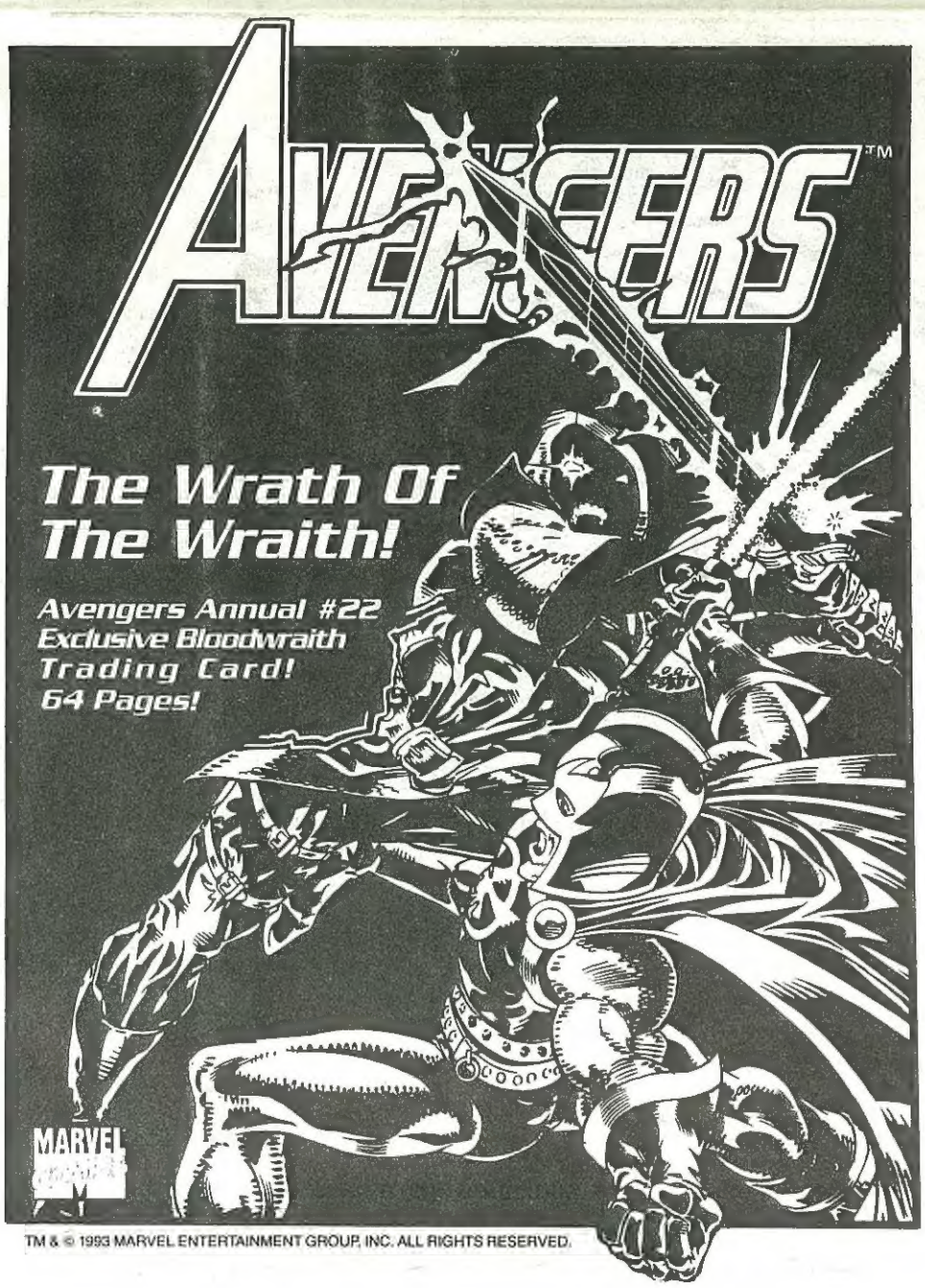
We're very story oriented here, but people think of Continuity as an artist's company. I don't know why that is, really, since most of the product I've ever done has basically been known for the story. There's a certain point where the art ends and it has to be a good story; a lot of what people don't quite understand is that you can have all the good art in the world, but if there isn't a conscious attempt to tell a good story, it's not a good comic. It's like a singer who has a great voice, but you don't feel the song because he doesn't understand it, so he's just a guy with a great voice.

Believe it or not, I don't really care that much about the artwork; it just happens that I'm a really good artist. I hate to put it that blatantly, but it's the coincidence of my situation that I was trained to draw in a way that people really like, but after that, my focus is on the story. Is the pacing right, is the story moving in the right direction... Most of the stuff that I've ever been involved in, I set the tone and the direction. Most people forget that I wrote most of those ***Deadman*** stories, for example; I guess it's a compliment because they like the artwork so much, but that's not what's the most important thing as far as I'm concerned.

We're very pleased with the quality of the artwork we get from our artists. It's tough sometimes to see guys leave us to go to other companies, but I feel they still do their best work for Continuity. When they're working here, we get fantastic work from them. I think it's a philosophical thing; people have said that artists come to Continuity and draw like Neal Adams, but that's not a conscious thing. Mark Texeira came to Continuity initially, though, and he drew like Mark Texeira; it just so happened that there was a lot of Neal Adams influence in his work.

Tom Grindberg is drawing Batman now pretty much the way I drew Batman; that's how he came to Continuity initially! I never sat Tom Grindberg down, twisted his arm, and said this is the way you have to draw; he's always drawn like me. Not every Continuity artist draws like me, though; Trevor Von Eeden draws like Trevor Von Eeden, and he's always drawn like Trevor Von Eeden.

What it is, I think, is that we tend to pick artists who know how to draw well. If Jim Lee had worked for Continuity, he'd probably be accused of drawing like Neal Adams; he doesn't, but he draws very well. The same thing would be true with Marc Silvestri. Secondly, when you're working for Continuity, I think there may be a subconscious decision that since you're bringing the stuff in for Neal Adams to see, you really ought to do your best work. Artists *know* if the editor knows art or not; an artist can tell from the level of editorial criticism whether the guy who's criticizing him knows what's he's talking about or not. "I don't like yellow," or "Is this out of perspective?"—these are criticisms that artists don't hear at Continuity, because I know artwork and I talk to them on that level.



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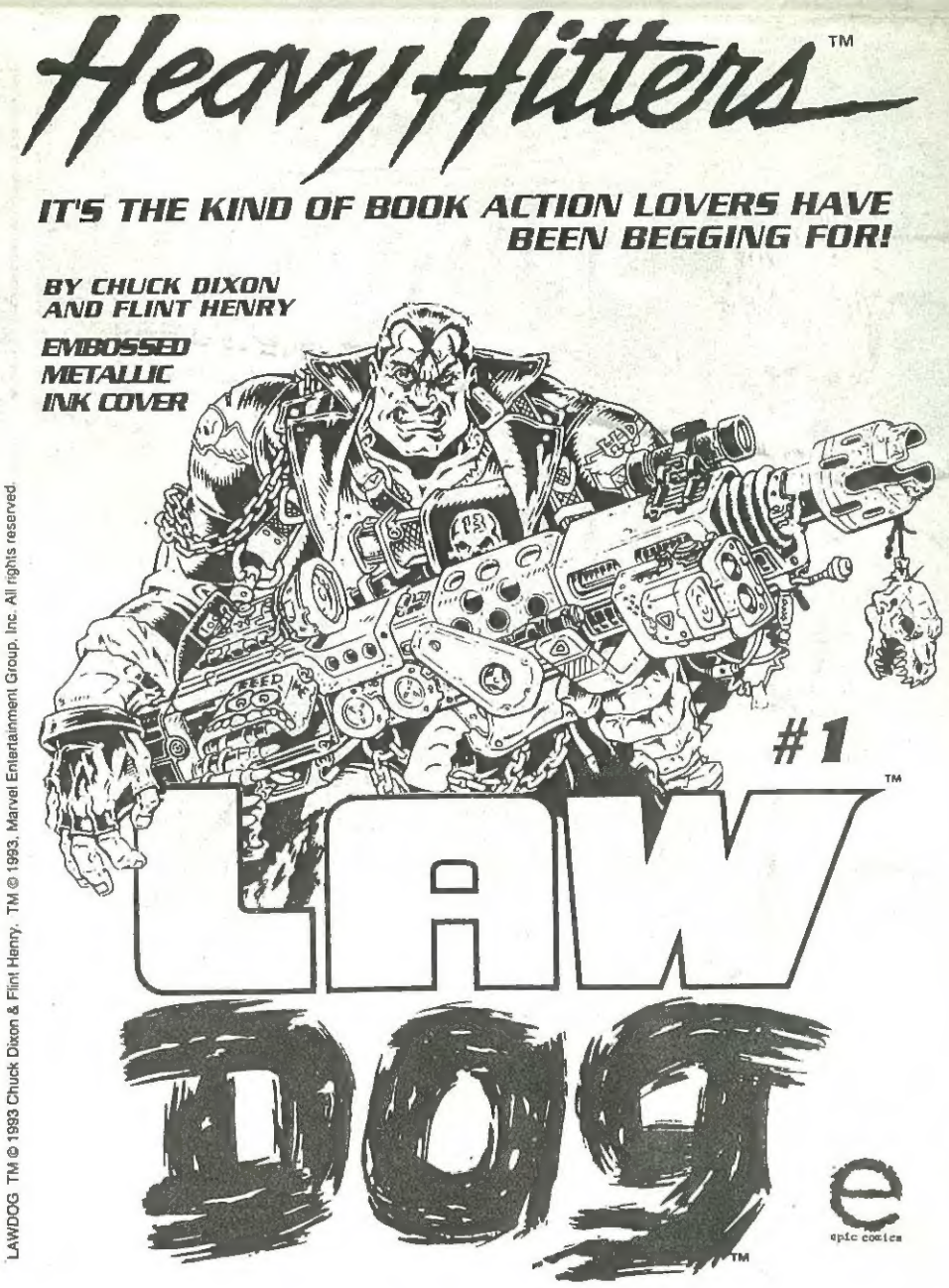
Heavy Hitters™
IT'S THE KIND OF BOOK ACTION LOVERS HAVE BEEN BEGGING FOR!
BY CHUCK DIXON AND FLINT HENRY
EMBOSSED METALLIC INK COVER
#1
LAW DOG™
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You're working with Peter Stone, who's actually scripting the Deathwatch 2000 stories; how do you divide the duties?

The ***Deathwatch 2000*** stories are written by Pete Stone; we work together this way. I basically came up with the overall outline of ***Deathwatch 2000***, which is a very complicated outline. It's a lot like a jigsaw puzzle, where you know what's at the beginning and the end and you work the middle out to make it suit. Where the story is very clear, I might just give Pete a few notes: "I want to have a battle at a nuclear facility; let me know what characters are unconscious at the end so that I can plan the next book." In another case, when the action is critical to what I have to have, I might do a tight synopsis from which Pete will work. Pete might come to me from time to time to get clarifications, too. It's very flexible.

Tell us about the Classic Cards Deathwatch 2000 card series.

We made an association with Classic Cards partially because of an arrangement we made to sell some stuff over television, both old stuff and new stuff. They have certain licensing that they would like to do for us—toys and games—so they approached us about doing a set of cards as well. They wanted to do a really attractive set of cards that were—well, let's just say that there have been several series of cards done in this industry that were a little bit lackluster, and Classic could make sure that wasn't the case with our cards. Since Classic Cards wanted to establish a long-term relationship with us, they wanted to do a ***Deathwatch*** set instead of a Continuity set; that gives them a chance to do new cards for our next crossover series.

I'm very concept-oriented, so I saw the gimmick covers and the gimmick cards as a chance to play. Our glow-in-the-dark cover got a lot of compliments, and that's the reason we do special gimmicks; we want to do them better than anyone else. Our hologram cover was probably the best hologram that's ever appeared on a comic. Even better, if you examine a hologram under a single beam of light, you'll find that it has a number of special hologram touches that no one else has duplicated. Our holographer, who;'s on the cutting edge of holography, was actually put in the position of having to do things that he's never done before. For example, we cut up another hologram and put parts of it in different areas of our model, so that we were making a hologram of a hologram.

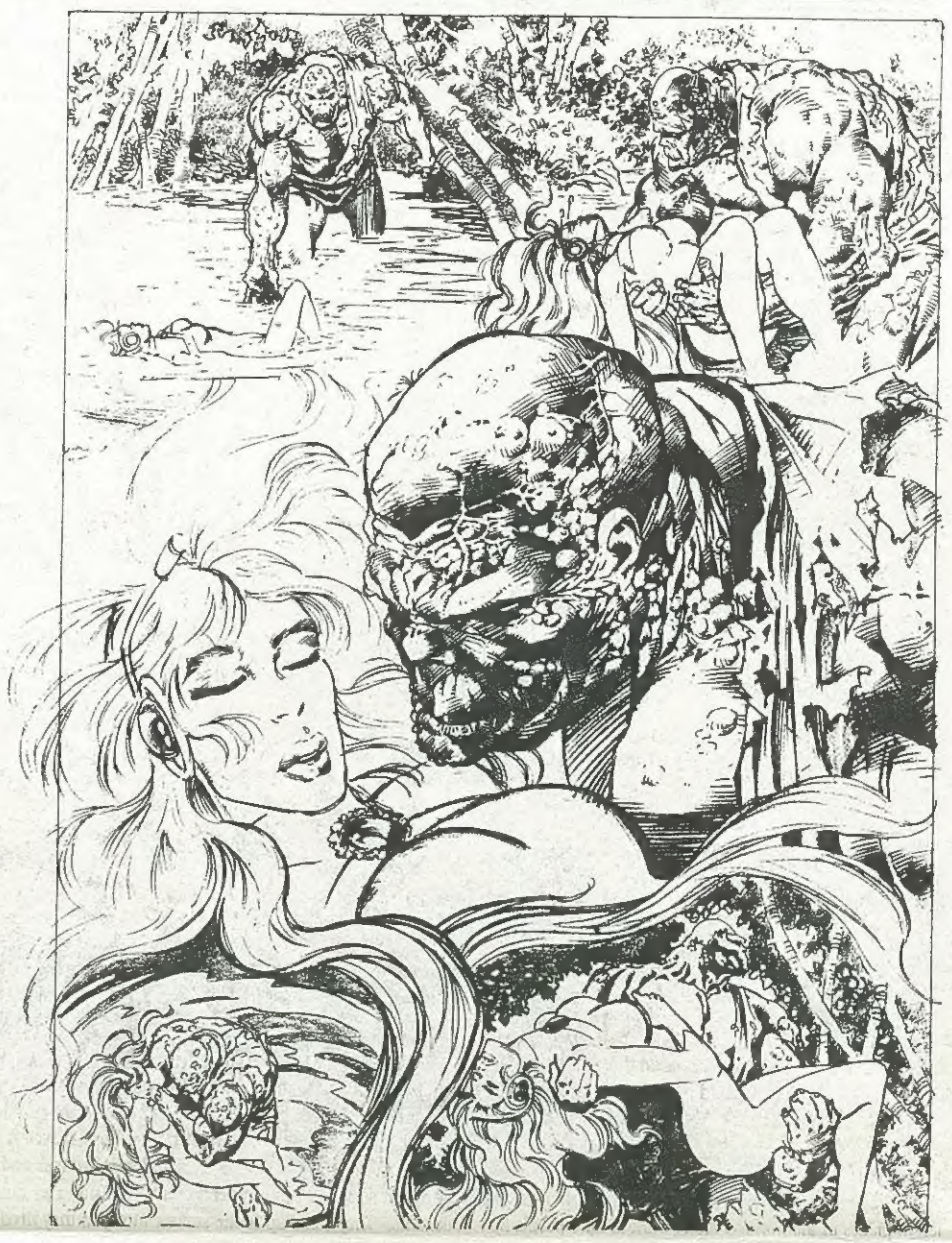
Since we like to experiment with different technology, we developed a set of special chase cards that are seven cards printed on transparent acetate. The feature a figure standing in the middle in a typical Jack Kirby pose, with a half a sky on the left-hand side. You take the next card and slide it behind that first card so that the sky matches the sky on the first card, making that character stand behind the first character. When you put all seven together, you get all seven standing behind one another with the word Hybrids appearing in the sky behind them. It's something that hasn't been done before.

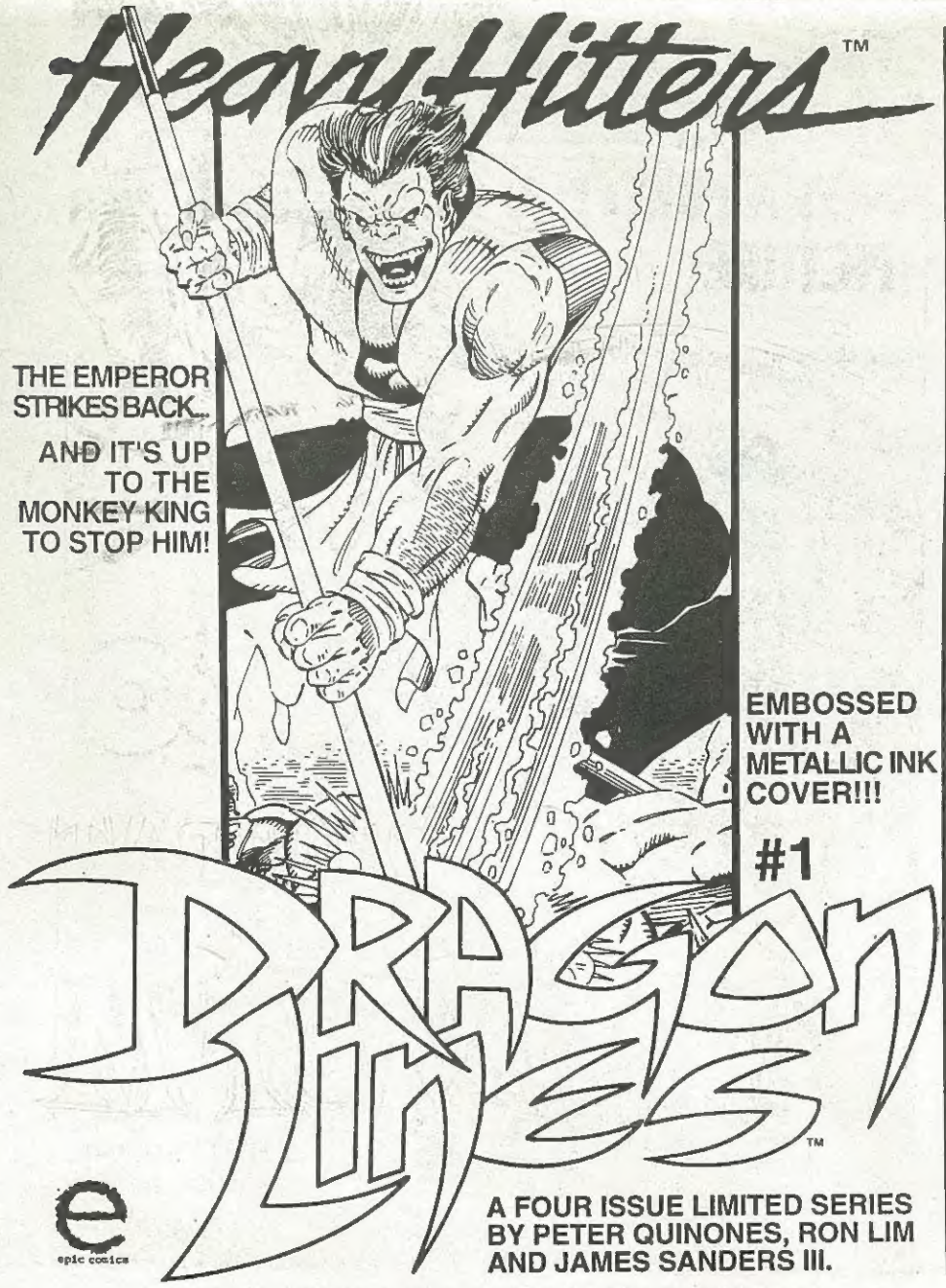
Classic also proposed that we put in a couple of sports figures; they had the license, and they thought it might make sports-card fans look at these cards. They also thought they might want to do a series of sports-figure comics in the future, or sports cards featuring drawn images instead of photographs. I thought about it and realized that, "Hey, I'll get to do Shaquille O'Neill." I'm as much a caricaturist as I am a comic book artist, so I thought I could do a really good job with it. We agreed to do three sports-related cards in the series, and I think it'll be an interesting challenge.

Speaking of high-tech cover enhancements—are you doing any of those in the future?

We have a lot of special covers coming up, too. We discovered a laser die-cut concept; this is different from the typical cut-metal die-cutting. Those cutout shapes are formed by metal blades formed into the shape of the cutout, and there are some real limitations to what you can do. We discovered a company that does what they call laser die-cutting; you give them a drawing of exactly what you want cut out, and they run a laser back and forth over the thing, burning the holes in it very quickly. It's a die-cut, but you can do as ornate a pattern as you want. On the back of the paper, you get burn marks; I didn't see that as a problem, though, but as something I could integrate in the book's marketing. So we're doing a cover like that. That's just one little piece of technology we're using; I really love this stuff.

For the third part of the crossover, I was sitting around

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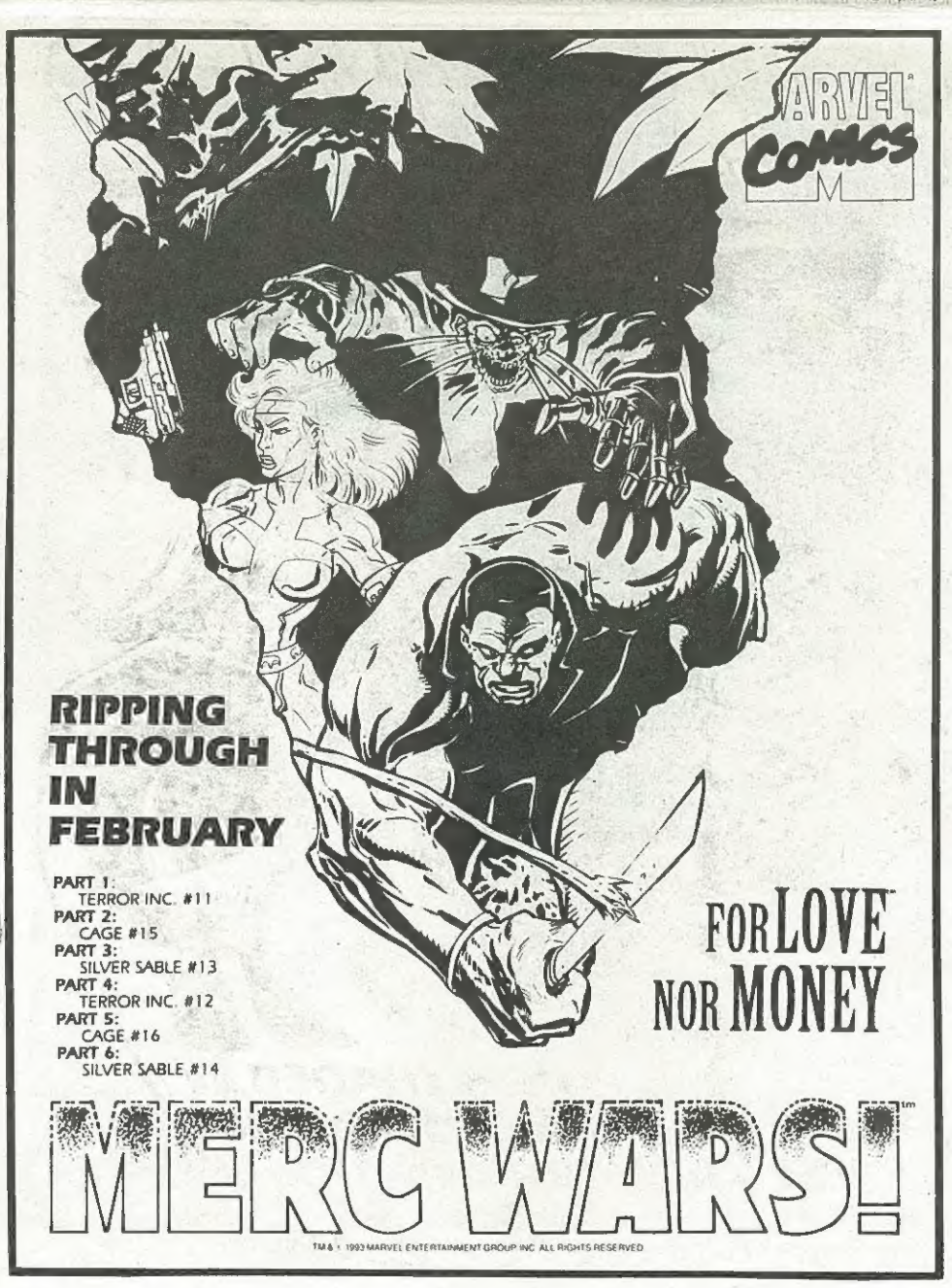
MARVEL COMICS
RIPPING THROUGH IN FEBRUARY
PART 1: TERROR INC. #11
PART 2: CAGE #15
PART 3: SILVER SABLE #13
PART 4: TERROR INC. #12
PART 5: CAGE #16
PART 6: SILVER SABLE #14
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with my daughter Kris, who basically runs the company. I told them that I had come up with a new idea; we were going to make all the covers indestructible. "You can't make comic covers indestructible," they said. "Sure you can," I said. "Here's an envelope made from tyvek, and it's indestructible." Everyone knows about tyvek, but no one's used it in a comic book before. We'll challenge fans to rip this comic book cover; we'll tell them that these comic books covers are guaranteed to last until the year 2000. Can you print on tyvek? Sure you can; people do it all the time! No one had thought about using it for comics before, though.

The Hybrids are an important part of Deathwatch 2000 and Valeria the She-Bat; tell us a bit about them.

Marvel has its mutants, and we have our hybrids. I wanted to do something different from what everyone else had done. I was fascinated by the idea of genetically re-engineering people to fit different climates. We may be able to develop people who may more easily live on different planets. So I thought, "What if corporations, knowing that we'd eventually be in outer space using this technology, quietly made deals with aliens to be involved in a hybridizations process so that people from Earth would be hybridized with people from other planets in order to give them a head start on interstellar trade. What if this caught on in different ways?"

The Hybrids come from human cells that are taken to another planet and hybridized with other cells from people who live on that planet; they're half-human and half-alien. I realized, one I thought about it, that this was a good concept to stand up against mutants.

I created a secondary group of characters, the Werebrids, that might have been the origins of were-creatures from different places in the world. I didn't want to have people hybridized with true animals, but with hidden populations of certain types of animals, like wolflike creatures with real intelligence who have remained hidden from human society. Valeria the She-Bat is such a Werebrid, part human and part of a series of subterranean creatures known as fire demons. They come up to the surface at night; they need heat, and they can take it from human beings. They're not really vampires, because they want heat; maybe there is an offshoot of them that are vampires, but that's another story.

A deal is made to clone an offshoot of these races. Two professors, two old to conceive children but wanting children nevertheless; the y make a deal to have two werebrids. One is a were-gorilla and one is a were-fire demon, Valeria. The first issue tells how they come into human society, how they become mercenaries. They're very successful at it; they're doing just fine as we pick them up. She is more independent than the others because she alone can fly. In real life, she's a high-paid fashion model; she can fold her wings into her body, and if she wears proper clothing, she can cover them up. When she doesn't want her ears to show, she lifts her hair up, pins her ears back, and combs her hair over those ears. There's no reason for anyone to suspect her, since no one would believe that she wasn't just a gorgeous woman.

Is Deatwatch 2000 the first phase of a major relaunching of Continuity throughout the year?

We have conservative plans for expansion. We don't have to satisfy investors who own the company and want to flood the market quickly for a rapid return. After June, we're re-establishing certain titles that we've discontinued, and then we're going very carefully into new titles. Most of our old characters will be back; by the end of the year, we'll probably have twelve titles, and we'll be very conservative as we move up from there. Those twelve titles, in effect, exist within Continuity already. Readers will be able to get a regular dose of Continuity every month on a regular basis; we'll make further decisions concerning new books based on what our readers like.

Last Week *CSN* featured reviews of *Icon*, *The Life of Groo* and *Spider-Man Unlimited*.

Next Week *CSN* will feature the complete April Checklist.

COMIC SHOP NEWS

Miss a Week and You Miss a Lot!

Have you seen anything in this issue of ***Comic Shop News*** that you can't live without? Make sure you don't miss it; clip this handy coupon and write down the things that you want you comics shop owner to be sure to get for you!

Name_____Phone _____

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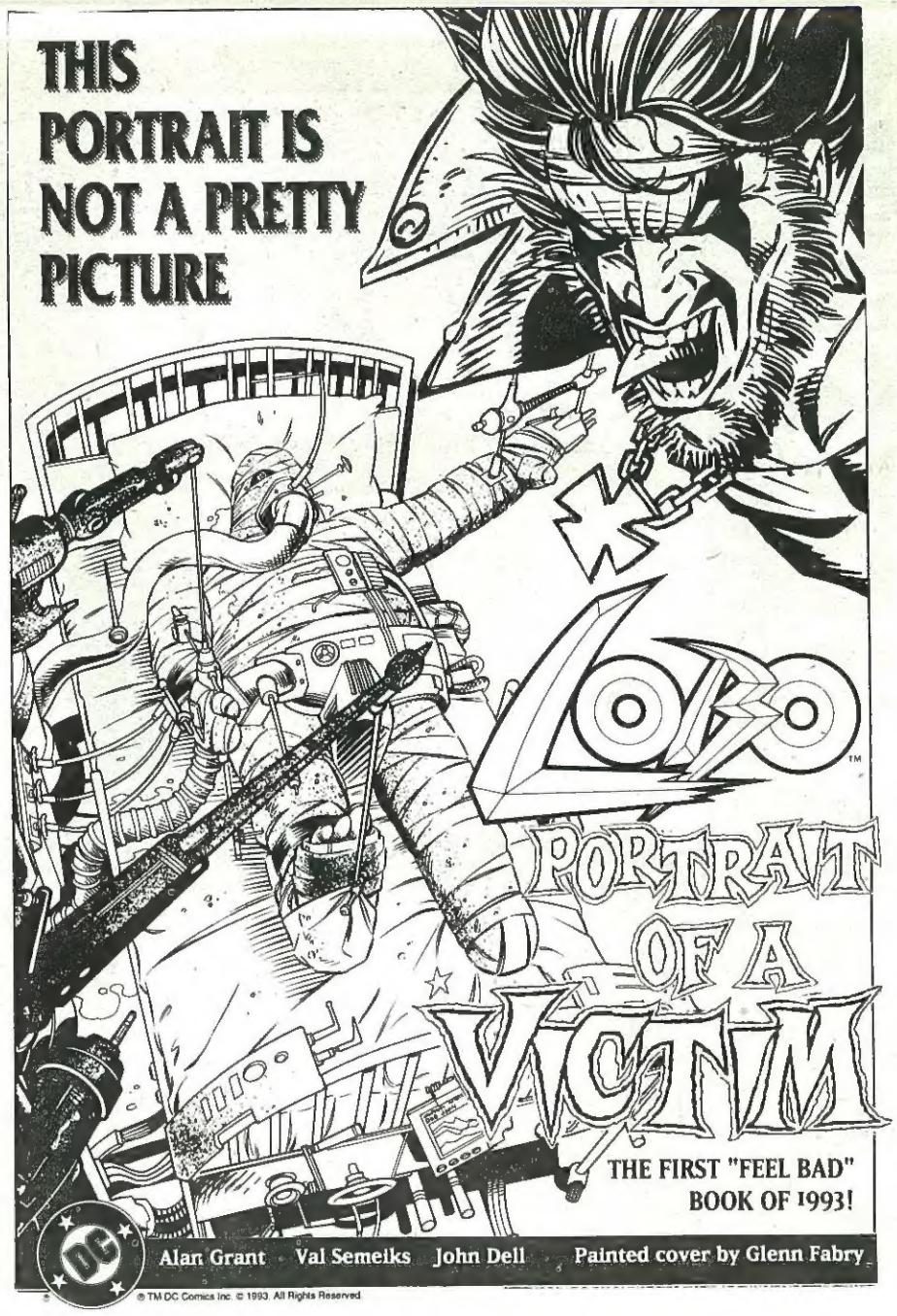
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PORTRAIT OF A VICTIM
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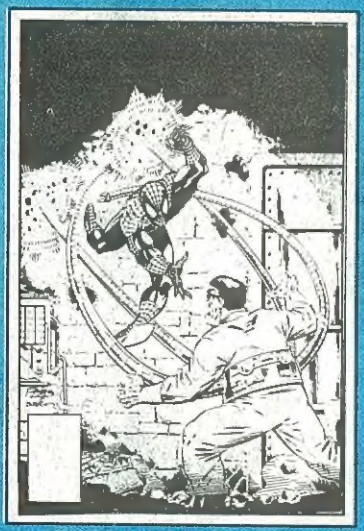
MARVEL HOT PICKS



SPIDER-MAN CLASSICS #4!

Spidey meets the merciless Doc Ock for the first time!

WARLOCK CHRONICLES #1!

Warlock Chronicles premieres with a beautiful holo-grafx foil and embossed cover!

CAGE#16!

The penultimate chapter to "For Love Nor Money!"

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #102!

Part 6 of "Maximum Carnage!"

SHADOW RIDERS #2!

The action skyrockets when Cable and Ghost Rider show up!

THE AIRTIGHT GARAGE #1!

Re-presenting Moebius' Airtight Garage in a 4-issue limited series!

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